



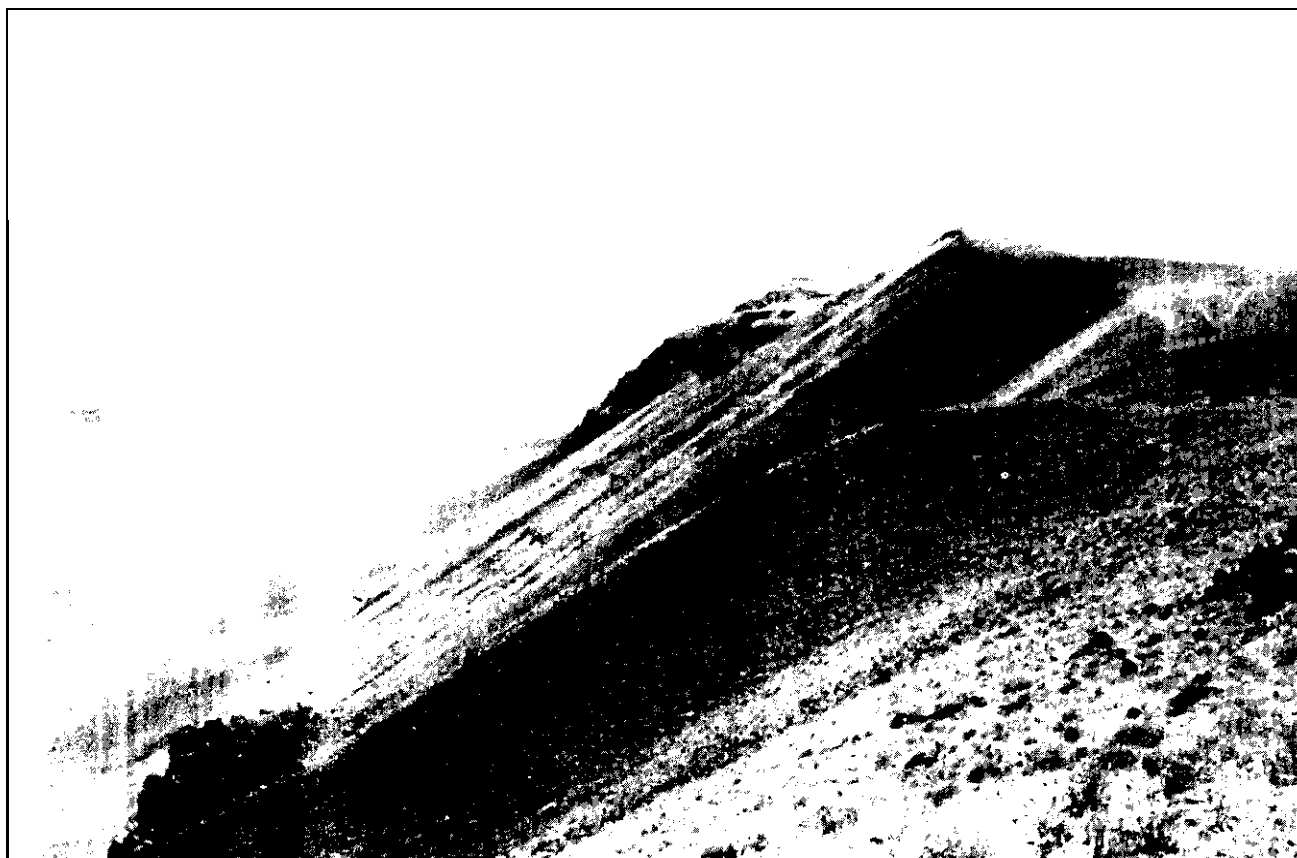
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Spokane District Office
Wenatchee Resource Area
915 Walla Walla
Wenatchee, Washington 98801

April 1997



Recreation Management/ Implementation Plan Saddle Mountains Management Area - April 1997



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

BLM/OR/WA/PL-97/006+1792



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Spokane District Office
1103 N. Lancher
Spokane, Washington 99212-1275

8300 (130)

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review is the Recreation Management /Implementation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the public lands on Saddle Mountains. The purpose of this plan is to address the existing land uses that are occurring on Saddle Mountains and to implement the OHV designations that were made in the 1992 Spokane District Resource Management Plan Amendment/EIS Record of Decision.

The comments we received on the Draft Plan and information gained from public meetings and contacts with the visiting public during the interim, provided the basis for many of the management actions presented in this plan.

Since the Draft plan was circulated for review and comment nearly three years ago, provisions are made for another 30 day comment period prior to making the final decision. Therefore, as you conduct your review please make your comments as specific as possible.

Please send your comments to the Wenatchee Resource Area Office at 915 Walla Walla, Wenatchee, WA 98801. The comment period will close 30 days after the postmarked date of this document. At that time the responses will be reviewed and any necessary modifications to the plan will be made. Then a letter will be sent notifying you of the decision and rationale for the decision. Therefore please keep this copy for reference.

The State of Washington Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation contributed to the preparation of this planning effort.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely yours,

James F. Fisher
Wenatchee Resource Area Manager

RECREATION
MANAGEMENT/ IMPLEMENTATION
PLAN
SADDLE MOUNTAINS
MANAGEMENT AREA

APRIL 1997

Recommended by:

Gary J. Yeager
Gary J. Yeager, Recreation Planner

Date: April 11, 1997

Approved by:

Jim F. Fisher, Wenatchee Resource Area Manager

Date: _____

Chapter 1

Introduction

The preparation of this plan was made possible by funds from the Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC). In 1992 the Spokane District Wenatchee Resource Area submitted a proposal to the IAC for funds to prepare a Recreation/Implementation Management Plan for the Public Lands on Saddle Mountains. A total of \$30,000 was approved and made available. The proposed completion date was scheduled for July of 1994. However, concerns raised during the comment period on the draft plan required that the plan be delayed.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this plan is to provide the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with a basis for making management decisions relating to Federal lands within the Saddle Mountains Management Area. The plan's primary focus is on minimizing resource conflicts on the Saddle Mountains, and to implement the Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) designations made in the Spokane District Resource Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement of August 1985, as amended in June 1992.

Public Involvement

To ensure public involvement, BLM held a series of public meetings: Othello (1-28-92), Kennewick (1-29-92) and Bellevue (1-30-92). Total attendance at the three meetings was 115. Also, at the Bellevue meeting, a petition letter signed by 34 people was submitted. At these meetings, a variety of concerns were expressed for continuing historical uses including rockhounding, OHV riding, livestock grazing, horseback riding, hang gliding and paragliding, and to a lesser extent, camping.

Some of the suggestions made at these meetings are reflected in this document as management actions, while other suggestions were rejected as either impractical, uneconomical, or incompatible with existing authorized uses.

Additional public meetings were held during the comment period on the draft plan. BLM also held meetings to discuss the plan and implementation phases. See Appendix for a summary of the written comments and responses.

Relationship to Land Use Planning

The Spokane District Resource Management Plan (RMP) Record of Decision (1985) identified the Saddle Mountains as being important for minerals, livestock grazing, recreation, wildlife habitat, soils and watershed. The RMP recommended preparation of an activity plan for the Saddle Mountains Management Area to provide management parameters for the identified resource values.

The RMP (page 70, Alternative B Preferred Alternative) directs BLM to manage the public lands in the Saddle Mountains for multiple use purposes. General management direction for this area is summarized as follows:

Keep the public lands open to oil and gas leasing, livestock grazing, and recreation

Designate a casual use area consisting of 4,300 acres on the west end of Saddle Mountains as being open to OHV use. Restrict OHV use to designated roads and trails on an additional 18,700 acres.

Pursue land exchanges or easements with other federal agencies, the State of Washington, and private parties to complement grazing and recreation management.

Minimize surface disturbing activities in favor of watershed values

The above RMP management direction is consistent with the BLM's general recreation policy as stated in Recreation 2000 A Strategic Plan (1989). That policy is to ensure the continued availability of public land for a diversity of resource-dependent outdoor recreation opportunities while maintaining a balanced multiple use concept. The management direction is also in alignment with the national recreation plan's draft update (see Washington Office Instruction Memo #94-166) to enhance a diversity of quality outdoor recreation experience opportunities on public lands. An important element of the update is to emphasize ecosystem management, and sustainable natural, cultural, social and economic systems.

Setting

Location

The Saddle Mountains Management Area is located in Grant County in central Washington, about 10 miles south of Interstate Highway 90 and 40-50 miles north of the Tri-Cities. It extends for approximately twenty-six miles along the crest of the Saddle Mountains from the Columbia River to the Adams County line (See map 1).

Access

The Saddle Mountains are accessible from three state highways (Highways 243, 24 and 26) and two county roads. State Highway 243, which parallels the Columbia River, provides physical access to the western portion of the area. The southwestern portion of the Saddle Mountains can be accessed from Highway 24 via "R" Road, one mile east of the town of Mattawa and County right of way via O road, 4 miles east of Mattawa. The eastern portion can be accessed from Highway 24 via Corfu Road located at the entrance to the Wahluke Wildlife Recreation Area (about 20 miles east of Mattawa). This road crosses the mountain and eventually intersects Highway 26 at Corfu, Washington.

Area and Ownership

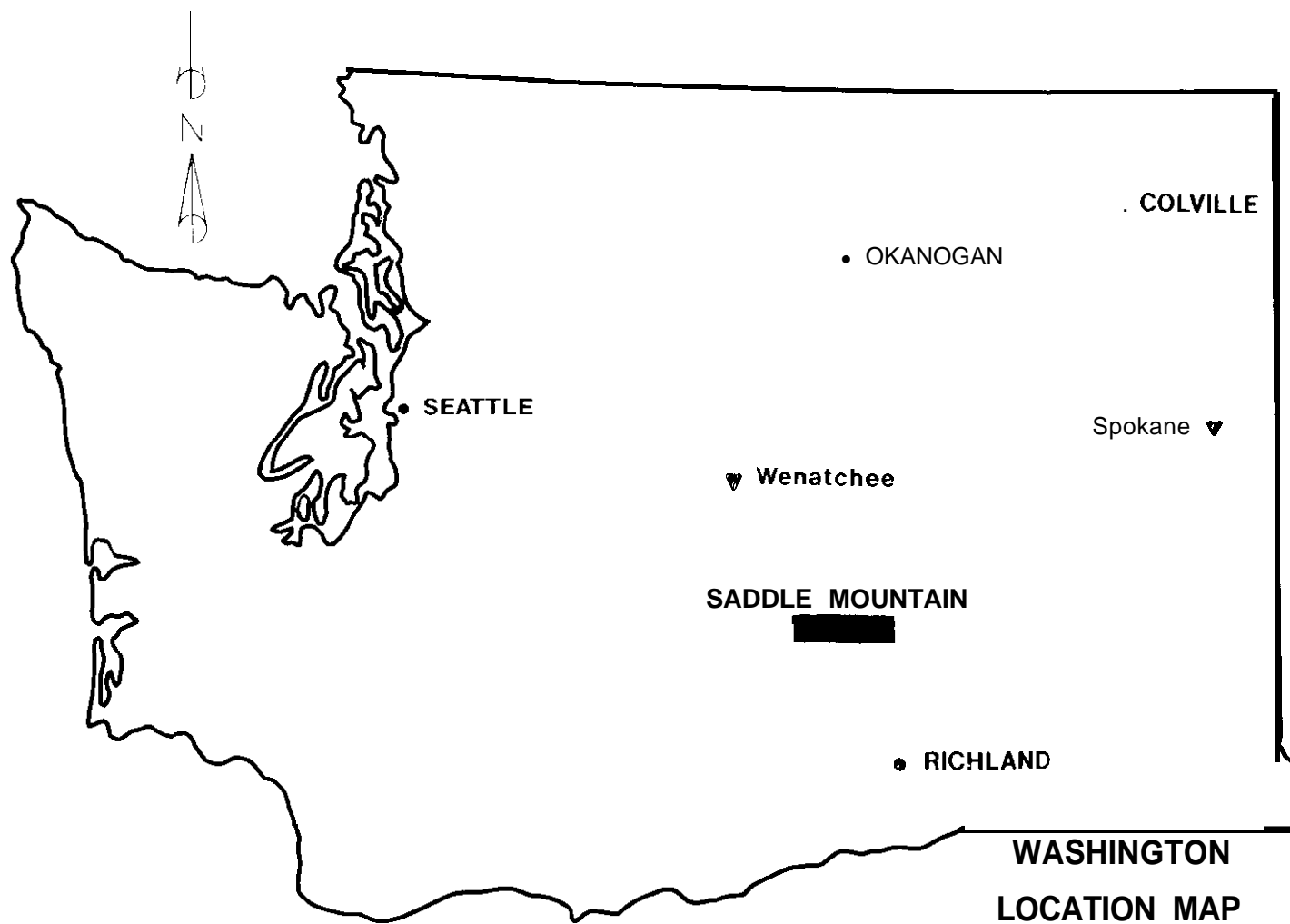
The BLM manages 45 parcels of public land totaling more than 23,000 acres in the Saddle Mountains. The parcels are intermingled with other ownerships including private land on more than one third of the area. Isolation of some parcels and their lack of legal access has resulted in trespass problems for the local landowners.

Climate

The Saddle Mountains are in a semiarid climatic zone. The annual precipitation ranges between 5 and 9 inches, with the most received between late fall and early spring. Temperatures range from an average minimum of about 20 degrees Fahrenheit in January to an average maximum of about 91 degrees Fahrenheit in July.

Topography

Elevations within the Saddle Mountains Management Area range from a low of 486 feet at the Columbia River on the recreation area's west side, to approximately 2,700 feet at Wahatis Peak on the eastern side. The Saddle Mountains are one of the east-west trending anticlinal structures in the Columbia Basin. The main plateau consists of a rather sharp ridge rising about 1,600 feet higher than the surrounding plain. These mountains were subject to considerable faulting in the geologic past. Southern slopes are gentle in comparison to the precipitously bold relief of the north facing cliffs.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

SPOKANE DISTRICT

1997

**SADDLE MOUNTAIN
RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

MAP 1

Sand dunes on the western toe slopes are a natural phenomenon partly caused by strong winds in this area.

Hydrology

The Columbia River flows along the west boundary of the Saddle Mountains. This portion of the river contains slack water behind Priest Rapids Dam.

Lower Crab Creek flows westerly near the northern boundary of the area. The natural flow of this creek has been supplemented through drainage of irrigation water.

There are several ephemeral streams/drainages on Saddle Mountains the most notable is Rock Creek located near the west end in T15NR23E in Section 24.

Soil

The soils that are found in association on the Saddle Mountains range from very deep and well-drained to excessively well-drained (sandy) soils, to very shallow with rock outcrops. The deep, well-drained soils can be found mostly on the upland flat benches or on areas with rolling topography. The shallow sites are predominately found on the steep north and south facing slopes and ridge tops. The east facing slopes tend to have deeper soil material than the west-facing slopes. This is due to the prevailing winds that deposit sands and silts on the leeward side of the hills.

Vegetation

The Saddle Mountains are dominated by big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*). Bluebunch wheatgrass dominates the grass community at the higher elevations, and cheatgrass dominates the lower levels.

Several sensitive plant species have been identified within the recreation area boundary They are as follows:

Lomatium tuberosum	Federal Candidate
Arennaria Franklinii var. thompsonii	Federal Candidate
Oxytropis campestris var. wanapum	Federal Candidate
Cryptantha interrupta	State Sensitive
Cryptantha leucophaea	State Sensitive
Arennaria nuttallii	State Sensitive
Penstemon sp.	Undocumented/new species
Lesquerella sp.	Undocumented/new species

Poisonous plants such as low larkspur, death camas, loco weed and lupine grow in small quantities throughout the area.

In recent years, the density of diffuse knapweed (a noxious weed) has increased in the Saddle Mountains. Knapweed has been observed near or adjacent to disturbed areas such as roads, the base of power lines, and on trails from OHV or livestock use. Because of this increase, the infested areas on BLM administered land have been included in the Spokane District's Noxious Weed Control program. This program involves treatment of noxious weeds through a variety of methods including biological, chemical or mechanical methods.

Fire History

Since 1980, BLM records indicate that there were six wildfires that have either started on public land in the Saddle Mountains Area or have threatened public land. The causes of these fires ranged from lightning, equipment use, and railroad operation. These fires occurred on the eastern third of Saddle Mountains.



View of the upland grass land on Saddle Mountains.

Information regarding fire history and causes prior to 1980 is incomplete. See Table 1-1 Saddle Mountains Fire History/Occurrence.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

The shrub steppe habitats, rock outcrops and cliffs of the Saddle Mountains support a variety of wildlife which are adapted to live in this relatively open and arid area. Mule deer and coyotes are the largest mammals consistently observed within the recreation area. Small mammals, which are abundant in the area, include black-tailed jackrabbits, Nuttall's cottontails, bushy-tailed woodrats, striped skunks, badgers and a great number and variety of mice, shrews, and bats.

Table I-I. Saddle Mountains Fire History/Occurrence 1980-1995

Year	Fire#	Cause	Location		Acres at Control
			Lat.	Lon.	
1982	6851	Equipment use	46:48'	119:35'	2,800
1983	6853	Railroad Mgmt.	46:50'	119:35'	9,150
1985	P442	Power Line Arc	46:49'	119:25'	0.3
1987	P488	Birds in Elec. Wires	46:49'	119:28'	16
1989	P430	Lightning	46:47'	119:42'	162
1993	P428	Power Line Arc	46:50'	119:29'	3
1994	P482	Railroad Mgmt.	46:49'	119:30'	2
1995	P401	Lightning	46:48'	119:28'	2

Upland birds within the Saddle Mountains Management Area include chukars, ring-necked pheasants and mourning doves. Sage grouse once inhabited the area but have not been seen since the early 1980s. During the spring and summer, deeper-soiled portions of the shrub steppe support abundant populations of Brewer's vesper, lark, and sage sparrows.

Bunchgrass habitats on the east end support grasshopper sparrows and long-billed curlews. The long-billed curlews nest and feed in areas dominated by cheatgrass.

Except for limited riparian habitat in the Rock Creek Canyon, there is extremely little wetland habitat within the Saddle Mountains Management Area. Waterfowl use adjacent riparian areas along the Columbia River, Crab Creek and their associated wetlands for breeding, and as resting and feeding areas during migration.

Raptors that inhabit the area year round or seasonally include ravens; burrowing owls; red-tailed, Swainson's, ferruginous, and rough-legged hawks; prairie falcons; American kestrels; and bald and golden eagles. Two of these are special status species. The ferruginous hawk is a federal candidate for listing and is state threatened, and the bald eagle is both federally and state threatened. The west and north cliffs are important nest sites for many of these birds.

Some reptiles and amphibians found in the recreation area include short-horned and sagebrush lizards, gopher snakes, western rattlesnakes and Great Basin spadefoot toads.

Cultural Resource Values

The Saddle Mountains have been utilized by Native Americans for thousands of years. Hunting, gathering and numerous other traditional activities occurred on the mountains. Important food and medicinal plants were collected. Considerable evidence suggests that petrified wood was collected and used as a source material for tools and jewelry. A number of areas were likely used for religious or sacred uses such as "vision quests". The value of the Saddle Mountains in the lives of this region's Native people has been and remains extensive but is relatively undocumented by cultural investigation. More extensive archaeological surveys and interviews with Wanapum, Yakama, and Colville peoples may provide a greater understanding of the heritage values in the Saddle Mountains.

Several of the "ancient" quarry sites have been evaluated and determined by both the BLM and Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Specific traditional cultural properties, sacred sites or other National Register eligible sites have not yet been identified.

Historic sites in the Saddle Mountains are sparse. These sites reflect early non-Native American settlement in the area, livestock grazing, and wagon or freight transportation enterprises. None of these sites have been evaluated for their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

Minerals

This area is prospectively valuable for oil and gas and some areas have been leased in the past. Other mineral activities in the Saddle Mountains are limited to pumicite, diatomite, silica sand, sand, gravel, stone and petrified wood.

Vertebrate fossils have also been identified on the mountain,

Grazing Management

Grazing on BLM-administered lands is regulated under Section 15 of the Taylor Grazing Act. There are 1,975 animal unit months (AUMs) authorized for livestock grazing on 17,600 acres of public land in the Saddle Mountains. All of the AUMs are currently reserved for cattle. See table 1-2.

Table I-2 Grazing Leases

Allotment Number	Acres of Public Land	Grazing Period	Authorized use
0806	14,682	3/15-6/15	1,120
0807	600	6/1-12/31	62
0808	3,905	3/1-5/31	468
0810	4,240	3/1-5/1	312
Totals	23.427		1.962

Transportation/Developments

Roads and trails on the public lands on the Saddle Mountains total about 80 miles and are located mostly on the western end. These roads were constructed for various access purposes, such as access to the communication sites for maintenance to the four power/transmission lines that traverse the mountains; and management of the grazing leases. Some roads are county roads or rights-of-way that were established years ago.

Since the mid to late 1960s, much of the western end of the Saddle Mountains has been popular for OHV riding, which resulted in development of additional trails. Some roads/trails were developed or constructed in sensitive areas that have resulted in resource damage or have indirectly created trespass problems.

Recreation use in the Management Area

The Saddle Mountains receive extensive and generally dispersed recreational use year round, and increased visitation is predicted for the future. Primary recreational activities include: rock collecting, hang gliding, paragliding, OHV riding, horseback riding, hiking, camping and hunting. These activities have resulted in localized impacts to the soil, vegetation, wildlife, and livestock grazing operations. Inventories conducted since the RMP was completed indicate that some archaeological resources have also been affected by these recreational activities.

Visitor Profile and Visitation Estimates

For casual use, visitor group sizes vary from as small as one or two people to as many as 15. Lengths of stay range from a few hours to one or two days. Organized groups numbering from 50 to 60 individuals are not uncommon. These larger groups usually have stays of 2-3 days.

The largest group of people known to have visited the area numbered from 2,000 to 3,000 participants and spectators. These large groups were associated with competitive OHV events such as the Mattawa 100 Motorcycle Race that was last run in 1982. There have not been any groups approaching this magnitude since.

The Saddle Mountains are also becoming known as an area conducive to hang gliding and paragliding. Visitors come from all over Washington to take advantage of the consistent updrafts that are prevalent along the northern slope.

Rockhounds regularly come from as far away as British Columbia and the Oregon coast as well as other parts of the U.S. to converge on the Saddle Mountains in search of petrified wood that is abundant at several locations on the mountains.

Management Issues

Recognition and resolution of important issues are the key to successful planning and management. This section lists the issues that were identified through the planning process, including the public meetings.

Land issues:

Trespass on private lands

Recreational use of the Saddle Mountains has caused a spill over effect on private lands. This has resulted in excessive noise, disturbance to livestock, and damage or destruction to both government and private property, such as fences, wildlife watering cisterns and stock tanks. Because of these trespasses, management of the recreation area should consider enforcement and carrying capacity as it relates to visitor use.

Land ownership

The public has recommended that BLM acquire key private tracts to accommodate the expected increases in recreational uses and to mitigate associated trespass and access problems. This recommendation has been voiced through both oral and written comments. Another public recommendation is that all state and federal agencies pursue land exchanges or cooperative management agreements that would enhance recreational use of the Saddle Mountains.

Law enforcement

During the Implementation and operation phase of the Recreation Management Plan there will be a need to enforce the land use designations and to protect unique resources and private property. This need will become more important as the area becomes more well known and visitor use increases. Management direction is needed to minimize potential impacts and determine the appropriate type of law enforcement.

Recreation Issues

Trail system and designated use areas

Initial scoping indicated considerable interest in the need for a trail system and identification of petrified wood collecting areas. This plan should help define the most appropriate type of trail system to meet the recreation area's needs while protecting its important resource values. Additionally, the plan should provide guidelines on how to identify rock collecting areas and the trail system.

Parking/Staging Areas

Many individuals commented on the need for parking areas on the mountain and the need for support facilities including fences, sign placement, and interpretive kiosks. In considering these needs, the number and type of facilities appropriate to the area should be identified.

Rock Collecting

The Saddle Mountains have been of intense interest to rock collectors for many years. The area's popularity is due to the unique petrified wood found on or near the surface of the ground. The excavations associated with rock collecting are a point of concern. These activities may affect both known and unknown cultural resources and can present hazards to both livestock operations and OHV riding. The management plan will consider how these effects can be eliminated or minimized without detracting from the rock collecting opportunities.

Cultural Resource Issues

Historic and Archaeological Resources, Traditional Cultural Properties, Sacred Sites, and Native American Rights and Privileges

There is concern of potential impacts of recreational use to Native American values and historic and archaeological resources. Areas of most concern are where activities cause surface disturbance such as rock collecting areas and trail locations. As inventories of these areas are conducted, methods/degree of mitigation (e.g. total avoidance of an area, excavation, and documentation) need to be identified.

Vegetation Issues

Recreational use, particularly surface-disturbing activities, could damage or destroy some unsurveyed sensitive plant species.

Livestock Grazing Issues

Most public land in the Saddle Mountains Management Area (23,427 acres) is leased for livestock grazing. The grazing is regulated through four grazing leases (see Table 2-1). Three leases totaling approximately 1,900 AUMs have seasons of use generally from March through June; the fourth lease is for approximately 62 AUMs and has a use period from June through December. The management plan should consider how the varied recreational uses can be managed to minimize conflicts with the livestock grazing operations,

General Issues

Since the Spokane District RMP identified the Saddle Mountains Recreation Area for multiple use management, management measures necessary to protect multiple resource values and still allow for enjoyable recreational experiences need to be identified.

Chapter 2

Management Objectives and Constraints

Introduction

The Saddle Mountains will be managed, as stated in the district RMP for the following multiple uses: minerals, livestock grazing, recreation, wildlife habitat, and watershed values.

Objectives to guide future management and use of the Saddle Mountains for these multiple uses are listed below. Relative to all objectives, the BLM will involve and cooperate with other public agencies, private individuals, interest groups, and other resource users. BLM will continue to consult and work with Tribal Governments on a government to government basis.

Resource Management Objectives

The plan has six major objectives:

- 1) Manage public lands and keep access routes open for a variety of recreational opportunities/experiences, including both motorized and non motorized activities.
- 2) Keep public lands open for public purposes such as the exploration and or development of mineral resources, rights-of-way, or access.
- 3) Enhance resource management efficiency through land tenure adjustments. Identify opportunities for jurisdictional transfers, cooperative management agreements with other agencies or private individuals.
- 4) Protect and/or enhance sensitive, threatened or endangered species habitat.
- 5) Provide for safe use of the Saddle Mountains.
- 6) Protect and/or minimize impacts to important values such as cultural and archaeological resources, traditional and cultural properties, Native American sacred sites, or special status species.

Management Constraints

Several management constraints including laws, policies, regulations or other planning commitments must be considered in planning for the management actions presented in Chapter 3, while meeting the above objectives. Specific constraints in the Saddle Mountains Recreation Area include the following:

Native American treaty rights and privileges.

Three grazing leases that include 17,600 acres.

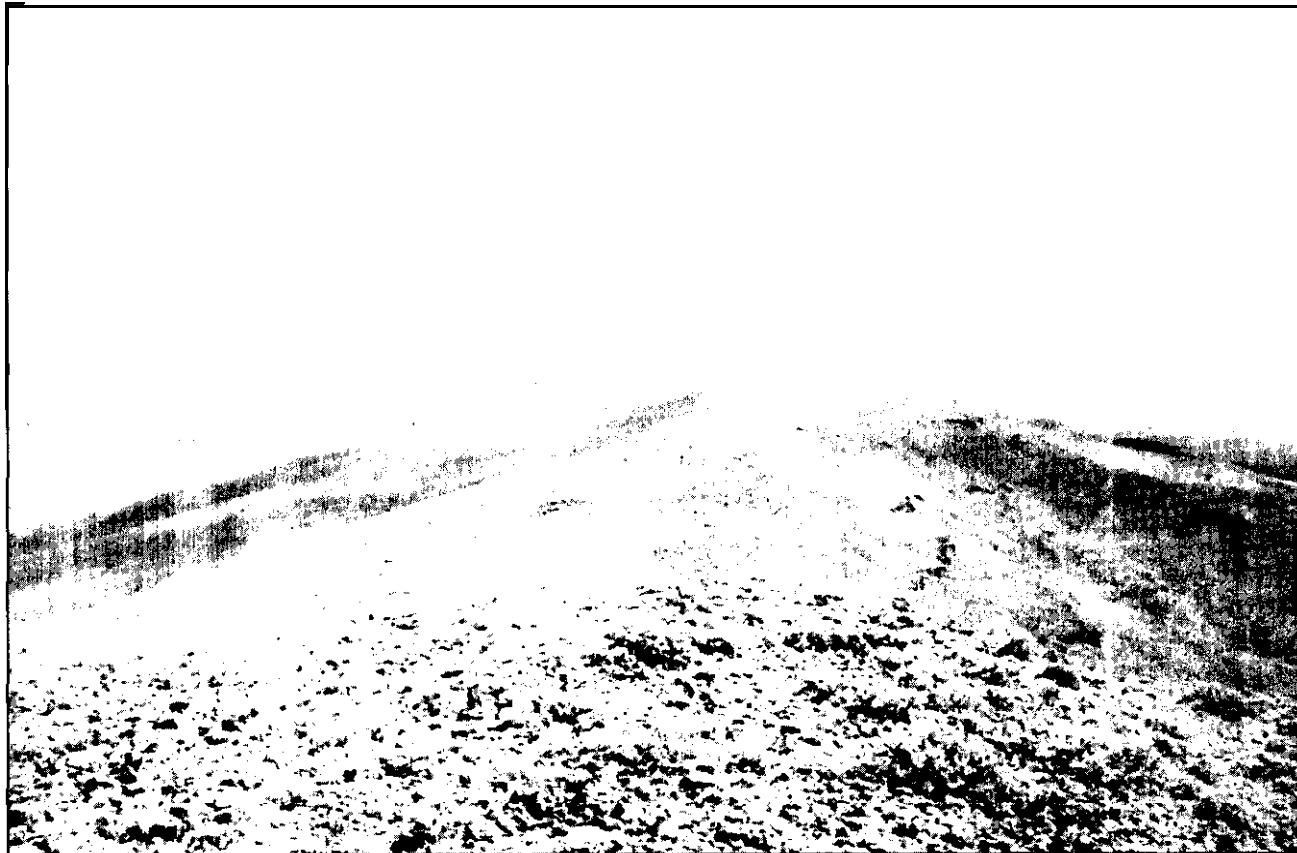
The Sentinel Slope Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

Limited escape cover and nesting habitat for many wildlife species

Complex ownership pattern of the lands.
Multi-agency jurisdiction on the Saddle Mountains.
Potentially significant historic and prehistoric sites.
Existing rights-of-way (access to communication sites).
Threatened, endangered or candidate species or habitat.
Existing Resource Management Plan decisions.
Noxious weed management and control.
Biodiversity commitment (ecosystem based management)
Fire management.

Public Comments

As a result of public comment several modifications to the recommended alternative have been made. These include dropping the provisions for construction of a parking lot or staging area and modifying the trail system to provide access to the isolated parcels of public land.



View of Saddle Mountain Ridge line looking east towards Wahatis Peak.

Chapter 3

Management Actions

Introduction

The management actions are designed to address the issues and objectives discussed respectively in Chapters 1 and 2, while considering the various management constraints. Guidance that is common to all alternatives is listed first, by category followed by Table 3 summarizing the actions. This chapter then describes actions specific to each of the five alternatives. The guidance is categorized by types of actions.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives

Land Actions

Conduct regular patrols of the Saddle Mountains Management Area to monitor visitor use and enforce regulations.

Negotiate for access/easements/agreements across private or other Federal lands to complete trail system, and for access to important use areas such as rock collecting sites, hang glider take off sites.

Mark the boundary of public lands and important use areas, and produce maps delineating this information

Pursue acquisition of private and State lands to enhance opportunities for multiple use management and to eliminate or mitigate conflicts.

Construct fences along east boundary of open riding area (See map 2-1).

Interpretation

Implement an educational program to inform visitors of permitted uses

Construct an interpretive kiosk identifying land ownership, access points and general land use information

Emphasize the Tread Lightly programs (e.g., “Right Rider”) to encourage wildland ethics.

Recreation

Prohibit surface-disturbing activities, including OHV use and rock collecting, in Rock Creek Canyon and other sensitive resource areas (see map 2-1). Conduct monthly monitoring, at a minimum, of all roads, trails, staging or parking areas and other facilities to determine maintenance needs and to identify potential problems. This may include the periodic closing, grading, relocating, or rerouting of trails or roads to minimize erosion or disturbance to sensitive resources or facilities.

Restrict organized events to three per year

Survey existing trails and modify, reroute, or close trail segments if necessary to avoid critical areas such as sensitive species habitat, significant cultural resources, important Native American sites, and private property.

Cultural Resources

Protect cultural resources on the Saddle Mountains Recreation Area by evaluating the present condition and importance of known sites. Establish a method of monitoring the future condition of these sites, identify interpretive opportunities, determine eligibility of cultural resources for listing on the National Register. Locate and monitor developments to avoid critical areas that have significant cultural resources or important Native American sites. Any known sites where disturbance has occurred may be mitigated or protected as determined through consultation with tribes, Washington State Historic Preservation Office and Advisors Council of Historic Preservation.

Vegetation

Conduct annual monitoring on all roads, trails, and staging or parking areas for the presence of noxious weeds. As noxious weeds are identified, incorporate them into the District's Noxious Weed Control Program. Annual treatment methods would include either one or a combination of biological, chemical or mechanical methods.

Grazing

Continue to implement the allotment management plan for livestock grazing.

Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species

Monitor and minimize disturbance to habitat of sensitive species.

It is Bureau policy to protect and/or enhance the habitat of threatened, endangered, or sensitive species, including both listed and candidate species. The BLM will comply with the Endangered Species Act regarding federal candidate or federally listed species. If an action may affect a federal candidate or federally listed species, an informal consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service would be conducted.

Minerals

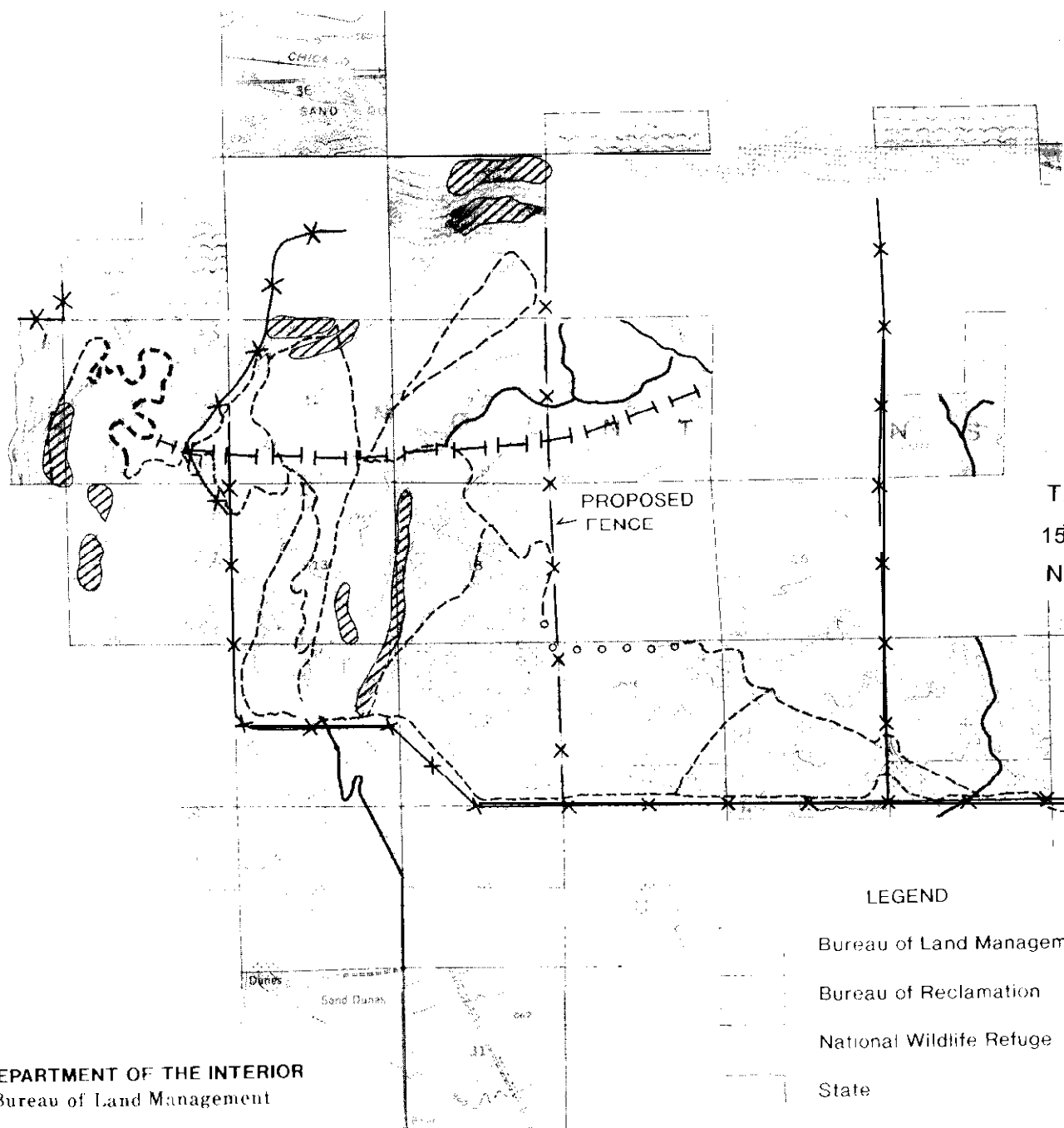
Gas and Oil leasing activities would be subject to the standards and conditions of the Spokane District Resource Management Plan Amendment EIS for Fluid Mineral Leasing (June 1992)

General Issues

Conduct a habitat analysis and coordinate implementation of projects with other authorized uses.

Pursue joint ventures with other providers/delivery partners such as other federal, state, local agencies, tourism offices and private providers, for such purposes as identifying visitor use trends to help meet future management needs of the area.

Review and update as necessary the Saddle Mountains Recreation Management /Implementation Plan. Some examples of conditions that would warrant change include situations such as a significant change in public land ownership, shift in land use, and new resource information such as sensitive habitat.



US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

SPOKANE DISTRICT
1997

SADDLE MOUNTAIN RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

MAP 2-1

C 01 06 97



Scale : 1" = 1 Mile

* Closed to OHV's

LEGEND

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

National Wildlife Refuge

State

Other

- X— Existing Fence
- X- Proposed Fence
- - - Existing Trail
- o o o Proposed Trail
- Street Legal Vehicles Only
- /// Sensitive Resources
- - - Seasonal Road
- H * Pipeline

R. 24 E.

R. 25 E



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SADDLE MOUNTAIN RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

MAP 2-2



Scale : 1" = 1 Mile

LEGEND

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

National Wildlife Refuge

State

Other

Existing Fence

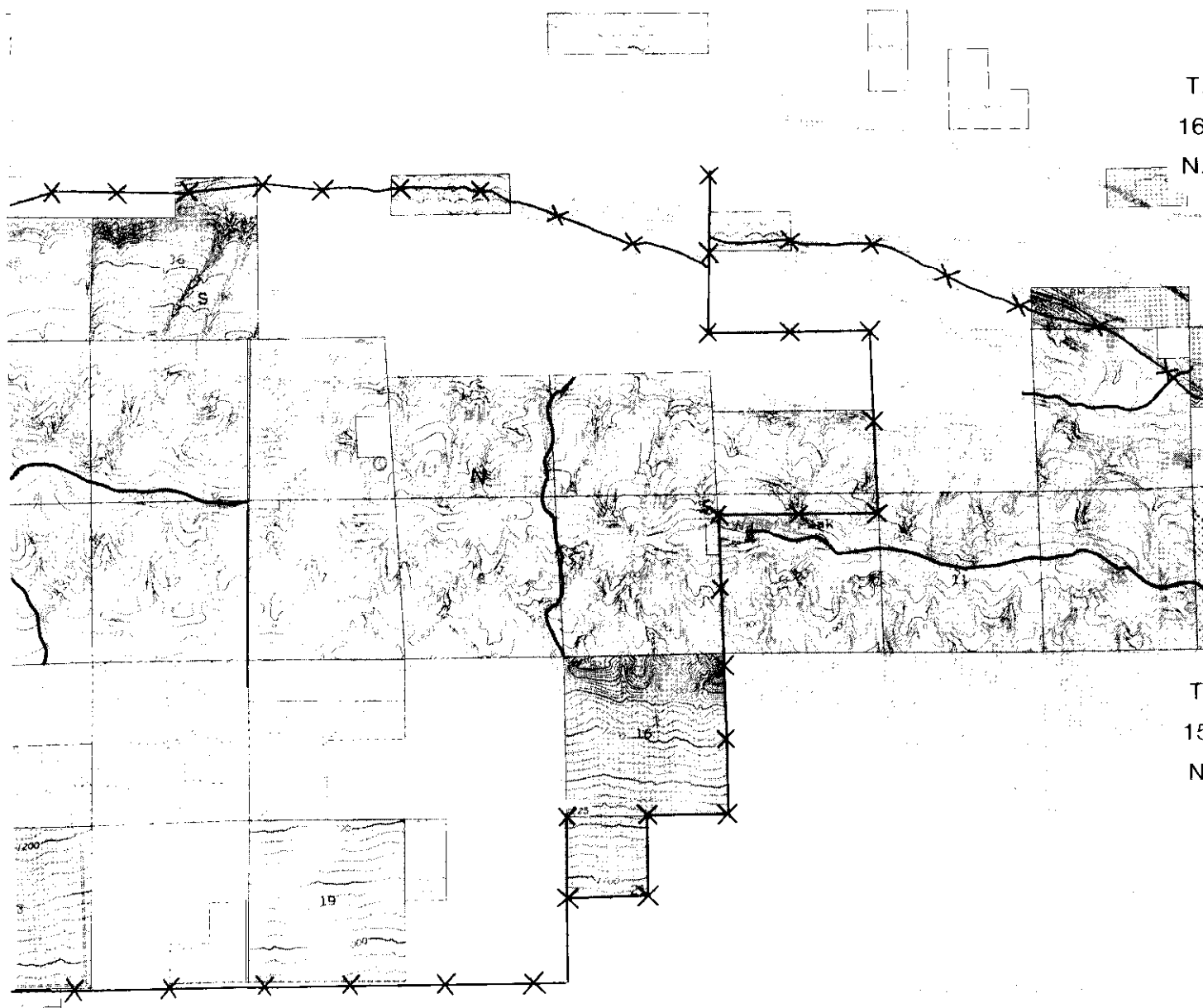
Existing Trail

Proposed Trail

Street Legal Vehicles Only

R. 25 E.

R. 26 E










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SPOKANE DISTRICT
1997
**SADDLE MOUNTAIN
RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
MAP 2-3**

0 01 06 96



Scale : 1" = 1 Mile

LEGEND

-  Bureau of Land Management
-  Bureau of Reclamation
-  National Wildlife Refuge
-  State
-  Other
-  Existing Fence
-  Street Legal Vehicles Only

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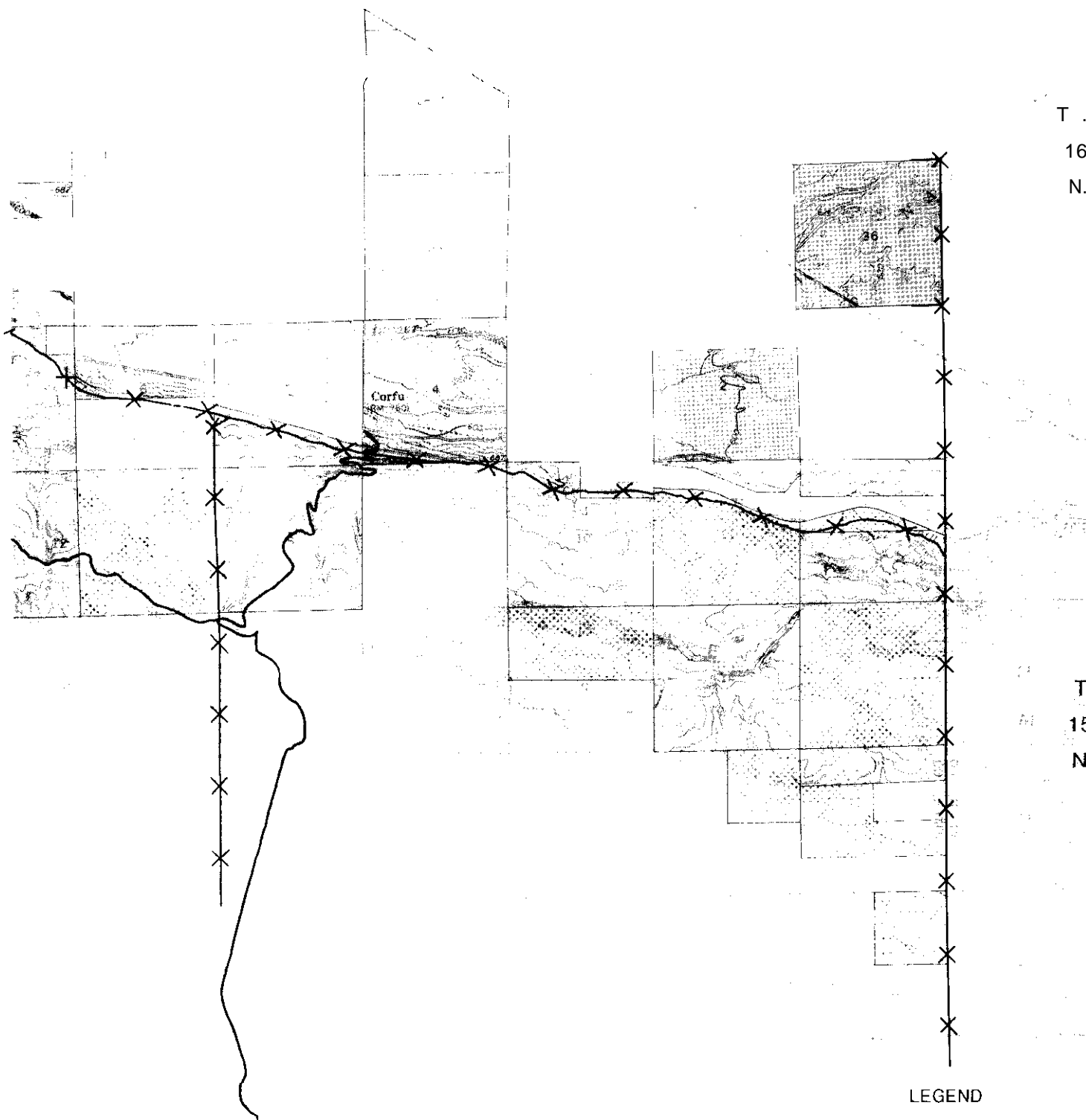
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LEGEND

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

National Wildlife Refuge

State

Other

Existing Fence

Street Legal Vehicles Only

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

SPOKANE DISTRICT

1997

**SADDLE MOUNTAIN
RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
MAP 2-4**



Scale : 1" = 1 Mile

Description of Alternatives

Alternative #1 (No Action)

The No-Action Alternative would essentially be the existing situation. Management actions would be guided by the decisions made in the Spokane District Resource Management Plan Record of Decision and the 1992 RMP plan amendment.

Alternative #2 (Recommended Alternative)

Under this alternative a trail system would be designed to minimize conflicts such as trespass over private or other public lands. The trail system would be designed to access the primary blocks of public land on Saddle Mountains through the acquisition of easements across other Federal and State lands. (See Map 2-1 and 2-2.)

Recreation:

The 4,300 acres located on the west end of Saddle Mountains would remain open to OHVs.

The trail system would be designed to emphasize access to the public land, minimize impacts to sensitive resources and other conflicts such as trespass over private lands. Some trail construction would be required. (Approximately 1.75 miles of new trails as shown on Maps 2-1 and 2-2 to route users away from sensitive areas and private lands may need to be constructed if right of ways cannot be obtained.)

Designated trails would be marked or signed. Trails not marked/or signed would be considered closed. The trail coding system would be designed to be consistent with other federal and state agencies (i.e. green dot system).

Encourage use of existing trails through use of signing and education

Place antelope passes at all fence crossings. Construct a wire or steel gate at these passes to allow for passage of emergency vehicles. (Standard Cattle guards were not recommended since access to the 5,000 acres of public land for 4WD Vehicles could be obtained via county right of ways to the proposed trail system.)

Survey existing trails and modify, reroute, or close trail segments if necessary to avoid critical areas such as sensitive species habitat, significant cultural resources, important Native American sites, and private property.

Designate additional areas for rock collecting as cultural resource inventories and mitigation is completed

Construct a fence along east boundary of open riding area (See map 2-1).

Cultural Resources

Survey the Saddle Mountains to identify cultural resources and use information to avoid critical areas such as significant cultural resources, and Native American traditional use areas.

Evaluate the present condition and importance of known sites, establishing a method of monitoring the future condition of these sites, identifying interpretive opportunities, determining eligibility of cultural resources for listing on the National Register, and relocate or reroute developments to avoid critical areas that have significant cultural resources or important Native American sites.

Alternative #3 (Minimal Improvement Alternative)

This alternative would be the same as described for Alternative number 2. No support facilities (i.e. antelope passes, boundary fence) would be constructed.

Alternative #4 (Limited use Alternative)

This alternative would be similar to Alternative number 2 with the following exception.

In the eastern section shown on maps 2-2, 2-3, and 2-4, only the powerline maintenance roads and the Wahatis Peak access road would be designated for OHV use.

Also under this alternative, two petrified wood collection areas would be designated,

Alternative #5 (Moderate Use Alternative)

This alternative would be similar to Alternative 2, with the following two exceptions. All trails would be designed to accommodate 4WD vehicles. Antelope passes at fence crossings would be replaced with standard cattleguards.

Chapter 4

Environmental Consequences

Introduction

This chapter describes the potential impacts, by resource value, to the public lands in the Saddle Mountains Recreation Area. Emphasis is on the environment's current situation and how it would be affected by Implementation of the various actions specific to each of the alternatives. The Impacts are summarized (see Table 5) at the end of the consequences section.

The impact analysis did not reveal any impacts of regional significance under any of the alternatives. The environmental consequences identified in this analysis are site specific.

Where data is limited, environmental impacts are inferred from knowledge of the area and professional judgement based on observation and analysis of conditions and responses in similar areas.

The nature and extent of impacts described consist of spatial or temporal change in the environment caused by humans. The change should be (1) perceptible, (2) measurable, and (3) relatable through a change agent to a management activity or alternative.

Resources Not Affected

The fish habitat, water quality, and minerals in the Saddle Mountains Management Area are not expected to be impacted under any of the alternatives.

Soil

Under alternative 1, the major impacts to the soil would be soil displacement, compaction and erosion caused by vehicular travel and rock collecting activities (i.e. digging holes with hand tools). These impacts would result in reduced soil productivity. Management Guidance Common to all Alternatives that would limit surface disturbing activities on steep slopes or sensitive resource areas would reduce impacts to sensitive areas. The area currently used as a parking area would gradually become increasingly susceptible to the effect of wind erosion from increased or repetitive use by campers or OHV enthusiasts. Impacts to the soil on the remaining public lands east of the proposed fence identified on Map 2-1 would be negligible because public access would be limited.

Under Alternative 2 and Alternative 3, Maintaining the existing OHV designation would result in an increase in soil disturbance from OHVs and rock collecting due to an anticipated increase in visitor use over the short term (i.e. first year following completion and implementation of the management plan.) Development of a trail system to access the public lands shown on Map 2-2 would cause an increase in soil disturbance to existing primitive roads and possibly to new petrified wood collection areas. This alternative would also disturb approximately 2 acres from the proposed construction of 1.75 miles of new trails. These impacts would result in reduced soil productivity.

The primitive roads/trails to be designated on the south facing slopes are located on shallow rocky soil. Consequently, impacts to the soil such as compaction and displacement from vehicle travel would be minimal. In other areas where the soil is deep, compaction and soil displacement would occur. Soil erosion from these areas would be confined to the immediate vicinity of the trail.

Under Alternative 4 (Limited use Alternative) soil disturbance from OHV activity would be reduced due to limiting vehicles to the power line maintenance roads and the Wahatis Peak access road.

Under Alternative 5, the impacts to soil would be greater than under Alternatives 1, 2, 3, or 4. The trail sizes would expand from about 1 to 3 feet wide at the minimum, to greater than 6 feet wide in some areas in order to accommodate the larger vehicles. In areas where the topography precludes wider trails, detours likely would develop that would result in disturbance of previously undisturbed areas. There would also be increased soil disturbance to areas leading to and from the cattle guards. This impact would take the form of increased soil compaction, erosion, and reduced soil productivity.

Air

Under all alternatives, the impacts to air quality would be minimal and localized, with detection limited to the immediate area of disturbance. There would be a slight decrease in air quality in the vicinity of areas used repetitively as a parking or staging area.

Vegetation

Rangeland

Under Alternative 1, there would be about 3 acres of disturbance associated with the random development of parking/staging areas adjacent to roads. In these areas, the vegetation would gradually become depleted. The impacts to the public lands east of the proposed fence line show on Map 2-1 would be negligible.



Rock Canyon Spring & riparian area.

Under Alternatives 2 through 5, there would be a loss of approximately 2 to 3 acres of rangeland vegetation due to construction of about 1.75 miles of new trails. The impact would be in the form of reduced forage for livestock in these areas. Disturbance resulting from OHV activities to the livestock operations would be minimal. As recreation use increased, there could also be increased potential for damage to fences or gates. Damage to these structures could result in trespass and damage to vegetation.

Riparian Vegetation

Rock Creek Canyon, the only area that supports riparian vegetation on the mountain, would be closed to OHV use under all alternatives (See map 2-1). Therefore, the impacts due to recreation use would be negligible. There would be some recreation activities, primarily fishing related, that affect riparian vegetation along the Columbia River; however, these impacts would also be negligible.

Endangered, Threatened or Sensitive Plant Species Habitat

Under all alternatives, the impacts to endangered, threatened or sensitive plant species habitat from OHV use would be minimal. Under Alternatives 2 through 5, habitat disturbance resulting from rock collecting activities would be negligible. Under Alternative 1, rock collecting activities, specifically the digging of petrified wood, could potentially disturb known endangered, threatened or sensitive plant species habitat.

Weeds

Surface-disturbing activities such as OHV activity, rock collecting, and livestock grazing would result in an increase in the spread of noxious weeds to other areas on the mountain. However, control measures proposed under Management Guidance Common to All Alternatives is expected to keep these impacts to a negligible level.

Specific control measures beneficial in minimizing weed infestations include the annual inventory, monitoring, and treatment of noxious weed infestations on the mountain. By limiting vehicle use to designated roads and trails as described under Alternative 4 would result in the least increase of the occurrence of noxious weeds.

Wildlife Habitat

Under all alternatives, there would be increased disturbance to wildlife habitat and species inhabiting areas near the trails and parking/staging areas. The disturbance would consist of increased noise from intermittent vehicle traffic and gradual depletion of the vegetation within the parking area and on the roads and trails. In relation to the habitat and wildlife population overall, these impacts would be minimal.

Impacts to threatened endangered or sensitive species would be negligible due to avoidance of sensitive habitats.

Cultural Resources

Alternatives 1 through 5 would have decreased impacts to known cultural resource values over the short term (one to 5 years). However, over the long term (beyond 5 years) as visitation increases the likelihood of vandalism to known and unsurveyed or undocumented sites would increase. This could result in loss of important cultural resources. Disturbance to traditional cultural properties, sacred sites, or other resources important to Native Americans will be avoided, mitigated or protected as determined through consultation with tribes, Washington State Historic Preservation Office and Advisors Council of Historic Preservation.

Recreation

Under all alternatives, there would be a decrease in the number of areas open to OHV use and rock collecting. The areas that would be closed to OHV use and rock collecting are those that have been identified as having sensitive habitat or other sensitive resource values.

Alternative 1 would result in a continuation of the existing situation. Except for the sensitive resource areas, most of the public land illustrated on Map 2-1 (west of the proposed fence) would remain open and accessible to OHV use and rock collecting activities.

Under Alternative 2, no significant development of new trails is anticipated on the public lands west of the proposed fence shown on Map 2-1. Existing trails in this area currently access the most popular riding areas. These areas provide a wide variety of experiences from the novice to expert. Construction and placement of antelope passes at the fence crossings would restrict the size of OHVs, accessing the lands east of the fence. Restricting OHV use to designated roads and trails, as proposed under Alternative 4, would be similar in intensity and effect to that described for Alternative 1. Alternative 4 would, however, indirectly restrict rock collecting activities because individuals wanting to access potential collection sites would need to hike from designated roads.

Alternative 5 would increase the types of OHV usage in the Saddle Mountains by accommodating the use of larger vehicles along the trail network.

The potential of increased use of the Saddle Mountains is high for any alternative selected. This area is becoming increasingly popular for OHV recreation, rock collecting, and hang gliding or paragliding. Under all alternatives, there would be reduced incidence of trespass by providing detours to avoid the obvious trespass problem areas.

Saddle Mountains Cost Estimate Summary

(in Thousand Dollars)
& Implementation Schedule

Facility	Year			
	1.	2.	3.	4.
Mark the boundary of the public land.		3.0		
Construct fence along western boundary of open riding area.		18.5		
Inventory designated trails for sensitive resource values.			30.0	
Mark Designated Trails. (Implement Green Dot Signing system.)				
Survey & Design			2.5	
Construction				8.0
Sign trails				4.0
Construct fence passes.		9.0		
Construct improvements in staging area.				
Improve Access to other Public Land. Land & Easement Acquisition*				9.0
Construct Interpretive Kiosks at Staging areas.			6.0	
Education & Enforcement	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
* Assumes acquisition through exchange.				

Appendix

Public Involvement

A draft of this document was made available to the general public for a 30 day comment period running from June 30, 1994 through July 31, 1994. During this time three public meetings were held to discuss the plan and to receive comments. Comments received were from both individuals and organizations. In many cases, a single response would speak to a number of different subjects. Consequently, rather than deal with each response as a separate entity, responses were separated and summarized under four different subject headings: Recreation Concerns, Cultural Resource Concerns, Physical Resource Concerns and Lands/Administrative Concerns. (The comment summary that follows provides a summary of only those comments from the 36 respondents identified below who commented during the 30 day comment period. However, an additional 106 letters were received in the 60 days following close of the identified comment period, and more comments continue to come in monthly. These additional comments although not summarized below were considered during the preparation of this final plan.)

List of the respondents

1. Public Meeting Comments
2. Doug Conner
3. Randy Hill (USFWS)
4. Gerald Gullickson
5. Paul A. Williams (Back Country Horsemen Rattlesnake Ridge Chapt.
6. Timothy J. Sheppard
7. Peggy Mueggler [Southern WA Mineralogical Society)
8. Donald Snyder
9. J. M. Smith
10. Jack Schrock
11. Jack Pickard (Richland Rod & Gun Club)
12. Jon Spunaugle (American Lands Access Assoc.)
13. Edward P. Branstoeitner
14. Tom & Dee Mosher
15. Grant County Commissioners
16. David & Meg Bartrand
17. Wendall Wood (Oregon Natural Resources Council)
18. Gary Maughan
19. Mike Eberle (North American Paragliding Inc.)
20. Richard Buck (Wanapum Peoples)
21. Michael J. Alberg
22. Lyn-Terri Price (Saddle Mountain Committee)
23. Tim Jenne
24. Dennis Hebdon
25. Nathan Maughan
26. Ken Davis (Washington Cattlemen's Association)
27. Carol Maughan
28. Becky Maughan
29. Doug Wells
30. Lillian Fulthorp (N. Seattle Lapidary & Mineral Club)
31. Irvin L. Yeager
32. Norman Steele (Seattle Regional Gem & Mineral Museum Society)
33. Melvin Olene (Magnolia Gem & Mineral Club)
34. D. E. Clyde
35. John & Lois Clark

36. Lynn F. Hall (Eden Mountain Management Co.)

Recreation Concerns:

Comment #1: Construction of a parking area and gaveling of road would be plenty. Do not place picnic tables and grills in this area. It could result in problems such as parties and so forth.

Response: Additional analysis including public comments revealed that a developed parking and picnic area would not be necessary and may cause additional administrative problems. Therefore, it was eliminated from the proposed plan.

Comment #2: Does allowing new trails in OHV riding area increase fire risk?

Response: The increase in wild fire potential on Saddle Mountains is not anticipated. Vehicle travel is being curtailed in much of the area. The increase in fire potential in areas where OHVs would be restricted to designated roads and trails is not expected to change.

Prior to 1982 accurate records of fire occurrence on Saddle Mountains is lacking. However since that time BLM fire history records indicate that there were 7 (seven) fires that either started on public land or threatened public lands in this area that were reported to BLM. These fires ranged in size involving as much as 9,000 acres to as small as 0.3 of an acre. The fire history reports indicate that there were various causes ranging from power line arcing, lightning strike and possible Rail Road related causes. See Table 2. Text has been amended to include this information.

Comment #3: By allowing dispersed camping does that include permitting open camp fires, enclosed (pit or boxed fires) or camp stoves only?

Response: Open camp fires are permitted on BLM administered lands.

Comment #4: There is no alternative to terminate OHV use.

Response: The purpose of this Recreation Management/Implementation Plan is to implement the decisions that have already been made in the Spokane Resource Management Plan (1985) and the subsequent Plan Amendment (1992). It was as a result of the RMP and Plan Amendment that OHV use was limited to designated roads and trails on more than 2/3 of the public lands on Saddle Mountains. This plan will result in more control of the recreation activities that have historically occurred on Saddle Mountains.

The elimination of OHVs from all of the public land on Saddle Mountains was considered but was dropped from further consideration for the following reasons: roads and trails were needed for the maintenance of the communications facilities, power transmission lines, and to administer the livestock grazing leases and maintain associated facilities. Closing the area to OHVs would unnecessarily restrict Native Americans from exercising their treaty rights of access to the public lands for traditional and cultural purposes. Comments BLM received on the Resource Management Plan of 1985 and the 1992 RMP Amendment did not reveal any compelling reasons to close this area to OHVs.

Comment #5: The 25 mile loop trail should not be locked into the management plan.

Response: The Spokane RMP limited OHVs to designated roads and trails in the area accessed by the 25 mile loop trail. This 25 mile loop trail is a direct result of this limitation.

Comment #6: Excavations from rock collecting activities should be marked because they present a safety hazard.

Response: Current regulations concerning rock collecting require the individual to back fill holes once finished. Existing hazards, holes and trenches will also be evaluated for closure or back filling.

Comment #7: OHV use on the western part of Saddle Mountains could result in conflicts with horsemen who also use this area.

Response: As long as there are different user groups there will be conflicts. However BLM believes that through education of proper wild land and trail etiquette these conflicts can be minimized.

Comment #8: Objection to alternative 5 is that replacement of antelope passes with standard cattle guards would undoubtedly result in much greater use of OHVs in areas other than the western section.

Response: Our intent is to provide the minimum access necessary to meet the needs of the public. BLM believes that the smaller antelope passes as described under the preferred alternative, would provide access to the east side parcels illustrated on Map 2 sheet 2 for the ATVs. Whereas 4WD vehicles such as jeeps, or 4WD trucks, could access these parcels via county roads or right of ways.

Comment #9: It would be far better to allow the use of power equipment to dig and fill holes for the collection of petrified wood and if necessary under BLM supervision. This would minimize the hazards and allow for a more enjoyable experience for rock collectors.

Response: The use of power tools for recreational digging of petrified wood is contrary to BLM regulations and is not permitted. Power equipment may be used under special circumstances if BLM determines it is necessary to alleviate some of the physical hazards presented by large excavations.

Comment #10: It is very important to keep the public lands open for recreation uses. The use of fences, signing of public land boundaries, and other steps to avoid further conflicts with private landowners would minimize the problems that have occurred on the Mountain in the past.

Response: In addition to fencing and signing, BLM believes that education is also essential along with enforcement. BLM views recreation as a legitimate land use, and will continue to manage the public lands for a variety of uses including the various forms of recreation.

Comment #11: We do not believe that several geologic formations in the Saddle Mountains are fossiliferous.

Response: An inventory was conducted on Saddle Mountains that revealed vertebrate fossils in several locations on the mountain.

Comment #12: BLM should clarify the comment that rock collecting activities (i.e. digging) has disturbed sensitive species habitat.

Response: The sensitive areas identified on Map 2, Sheet 1 (T. 15 N., R. 23 E., Sec. 12) has been affected by rock collecting activities. That is why these areas have been marked and closed to surface disturbing activities that could jeopardize the specific habitats.

Comment #13: Requiring permits for the collection of petrified wood has advantages in that it would help control abusive collecting practices, and the illegal commercial collecting that has gone on occasionally in the past. However they should be readily available to those who wish to collect in the area.

Response: As a result of the information received during the comment period, the permit requirement for rock collecting has been dropped due to the logistical problems associated with its implementation.

Comment #14: What is considered "an event?" Does this apply to rock collecting activities?

Response: It is possible that it could apply to rock collecting activities. Special Recreation Use Permits (SRP's) are issued as a means to control visitor use, protect both recreation and natural resources, and as a means to accommodate specific commercial recreation uses. SRPs are required for nonexclusive recreational uses which are commercial, competitive, involve an off-road vehicle event with 50 or more vehicles or for use of special areas. SRPs are not required for casual recreation use by individuals or for informal gathering on public lands.

Comment #15: The Grant county commissioners would like you (BLM) to be aware that we are extremely concerned about the BLM's plans for a motorcycle 4 wheel drive park on saddle Mountains. It is our position that these activities are non-compatible and in fact detrimental to livestock and existing wildlife and wildlife habitat in the area.

Response: It is not BLM's intention to create an OHV park on Saddle Mountains. The purpose of this recreation Management Plan is to minimize or resolve land use conflicts on Saddle Mountains along with implementing or regulating the OHV designations that were made in the Spokane District Resource Management Plan of 1985 and subsequent RMP Plan Amendment of 1992. (see also response to comment #5 Recreation Concerns above).

Cultural Resource Concerns:

Comment #16: Identify archaeological resources traditional and cultural properties. Native American sacred sites, special status species and other sensitive areas so that they can be avoided and impacts minimized.

Response: Where any discretionary surface disturbing activities are proposed such as the construction of a fence, or installation of a cattle guard, BLM has and will continue to inventory for sensitive resources including historic and archaeological resources, traditional and cultural properties. However, because of the sensitive nature of historical/archaeological sites the specific locations of these sites is kept confidential.

As sensitive resources are identified, appropriate measures will be taken. This may involve closing specific areas off to incompatible use on a permanent or seasonal basis, or it may simply require site specific monitoring.

Comment #17: Is the BLM now exempt from following section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act? Providing increased opportunity for the public to recreate on the mountain would lead to impacts on archaeological sites that may or may not have been discovered.

Response: Systematic surveys have been conducted in areas where the BLM has made discretionary decisions such as oil and gas leasing, spring developments, any new fence construction and so forth. Any designated trail will require a 100 percent survey to assure that sensitive resources can and would be avoided. This would also entail conducting a survey for cultural resources in accordance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Comment #18: The tribes and other interested parties must be consulted on cultural resource issues before any further development can take place on Saddle Mountain.

Response: The Wanapum, Colville and the Yakima tribes have been consulted. The only development that will occur on the mountain would be the construction of the boundary fence and trails as shown on Map sheet 2-1 and 2-2.

Lands/Administrative Concerns:

Comment #19: Monthly monitoring of roads, trails, and etc. appears excessive

Response: Monthly monitoring may seem excessive at first, however, due to the inadvertent trespass problems that have occurred and sensitive resources on the mountain, BLM believes this is the minimum necessary. If use patterns indicate that this is excessive, adjustments would be made.

Comment #20: Boundaries of the public lands should be marked so inadvertent trespass can be avoided

Response: Marking of the public land boundary and construction of the fence along the Eastern boundary of the public lands is a priority and should go a long way to mitigating the inadvertent trespass problems that have occurred in the past. (Set: page 15)

Comment #21: Has operations at the Hanford Area affected any of the recreation activities on the eastern end of Saddle Mountains?

Response: Discussions held with the Department of Energy did not reveal any concerns with regards to nuclear contamination of the Saddle Mountains area.

Comment #22: Lack of law enforcement to keep cyclists from riding where they should or should not, will not be an easy item for you to address and fix, but it needs to be both addressed and solved before Saddle Mountains is opened to motorcycles.

Response: A combination of tools will be used to assist the public in minimizing conflicts. These tools include fencing, signing and education efforts along with enforcement. The Saddle Mountains has always been open to OHV riding. This plan is being prepared as a means of controlling OHV use and other recreational activities that are occurring on Saddle Mountains. See also response to comment #10 Recreation Concerns above.

Comment #23: The maps found in the assessment documentation are also riddled with errors in the positioning of trails, fence lines, and ownership.

Response: The maps have been amended. see maps 2-1 to 2-4

Comment #24: Historically the multiple uses on Saddle Mountain have been grazing, hunting, and camping. Hiking and bird watching are compatible with these uses. OHV and uncontrolled rock digging activities are not compatible with the above uses.

Response: Recreational OHV use on Saddle Mountains has been occurring for over 30 years. The digging of petrified wood has been occurring prehistorically by the Native Americans for several thousand years. Recreational rock collectors have been collecting petrified wood for 40-50 years. BLM is continuing to manage for multiple use recreation opportunities.

Comment #25: How much can the U.S. taxpayers expect to pay for all of the recreation actions of Alternative 2? From where will this money come?

Response: Congress allocates to the BLM the funding to manage the public lands. These funds are then reallocated to fund the various programs that the BLM is responsible for. These include forest management, minerals, wildlife, range, and recreation and so forth.

Comment #26: Do the OHV's users pay fees to utilize the federal land?

Response: Special Recreation Use Permits are required for nonexclusive recreational uses which are commercial, competitive, involve an off-road vehicle event with 50 or more vehicles or for use of special areas. The fee for these permits is currently \$75 or 3% of gross receipts whichever is greater. Special recreation permits (SRP's) are issued as a means to control visitor use, protect both recreation and natural resources, and as a means to accommodate specific commercial recreation uses. SRPs are not required for incidental recreational use by individuals.

Comment #27: Do these funds then go towards such projects as alternative 2 recreation actions?

Response: No, these funds go to the Federal Treasury general fund. See also response to question #7 Lands/ Administrative Concerns above.

Natural Resource Concerns:

Comment #28: Monitoring for the spread of noxious weeds should also include private lands

Response: It is BLM's policy to coordinate noxious weed control program with adjacent land owners.

Comment #29: There are four areas marked identifying sensitive resources. On other pages, including page 22 there are further references to threatened or sensitive plant species. We ask that the species you are referring to be named in the management plan.

Response: BLM inventories revealed the occurrence of several rare plants on the mountains. The specific areas of concern were identified on the enclosed Map 2-I The species found in these areas are:

Lomatium tuberosum	Federal Candidate
Arennaria Franklinii var. thompsonii	Federal Candidate
Oxytropis campestris var. wanapum	Federal Candidate
Cryptantha interrupta	State Sensitive
Cryptantha leucophaea	State Sensitive
Arennaria nuttallii	State Sensitive
Penstemon sp.	Undocumented/new species
Lesquerella sp.	Undocumented/new species

Comment #30: Soils on Saddle Mountain are sensitive to wind and water erosion and can not sustain recreational OHV use without turning it into a dust bowl and destroying the ecosystem.

Response: There are sensitive areas on Saddle Mountains and these areas have been and will continue to be evaluated. If problem areas are identified, measures will be taken to mitigate the effects. It is for this reason that OHV use on most of the public land on Saddle Mountains is limited to designated roads and trails.

Comment #31: The proposed plan does not even mention many species of animals which are found on the mountain. such as porcupines, curlews on the western end of the mountain, crows, and magpies, and pygmy rabbits.

Response: The species Identified are presented to provide the reader with an overview of the types of wildlife species that could be found on Saddle Mountains, and those that are of special concern to BLM and have been confirmed to exist in the planning area that may be affected. The intent was not to provide a comprehensive list of all species occurring on the mountain. If BLM attempted to do this invariably a plant or animal would be overlooked as is the case with the crows or porcupines that you have mentioned.

Comment #32: Knapweed is spreading from the public lands to the private lands through trespass. There is no evidence that livestock contributes to the spread of knapweed (page 8, paragraph 7). Cattle trails do not show infestations.

Response: The control of noxious weeds is of major concern. BLM is committed to an aggressive noxious weed control program. Currently, the largest concentration of knapweed is along the BPA powerline right-of-way traversing the Saddle Mountains a mile west of Wahatis Peak. See Map 2-3.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Spokane District Office
Wenatchee Resource Area
915 Walla Walla
Wenatchee, Washington 98801
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Permit No. G-76